

A² amended
7.2 (Amended) A host cell transduced with the nucleic acid molecule according to claim 1.

A³
11. ~~7.2~~ (Amended) A method of regulating flowering in plants comprising: transducing a plant with the nucleic acid molecule according to claim 1 under conditions effective to regulate flowering in the plant.

A⁴
12. ~~20~~ (Amended) A method of increasing fertility in plants comprising: transducing a plant with the nucleic acid molecule according to claim 1 under conditions effective to increase fertility in the plant.

A⁵
13. ~~22~~ (Amended) A method of increasing fecundity of plants comprising: transducing a plant with the nucleic acid molecule according to claim 1 under conditions effective to increase fecundity of the plant.

24. (Amended) A method of decreasing fertility in plants comprising: transducing a plant with the nucleic acid molecule according to claim 1 mutated to cause disruption of the nucleic acid molecule under conditions effective to decrease fertility.

A⁶
25. (Amended) A method according to claim 24 wherein the plant is transduced with a nucleic acid molecule which encodes either 1) an antisense nucleic acid complementary to the nucleic acid molecule that encodes an amino acid having SEQ. ID. No. 2, 2) an antisense nucleic acid complementary to the nucleotide sequence of SEQ. ID. No. 1, 3) an antisense nucleic acid complementary to a nucleic acid molecule that is at least 55% similar to the nucleotide sequence of SEQ. ID. No. 1 by basic BLAST using default parameters analysis, or 4) hybridizes to the nucleotide sequence of SEQ. ID. No. 1 under stringent conditions characterized by a hybridization buffer comprising 0.9M sodium citrate buffer at a temperature of 45°C.